

On The importance of Medical Homes to Children with Special Health Care Needs:

Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Lisa Wilson and I am a parent of and advocate for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.

One in five children in Montana has a Special Healthcare Need and I am here today to explain why access to a medical home is important for these sick children in our communities.

My son, Logan, was born early and weighed just over one pound. He had a severe brain hemorrhage, a hole in his heart, and lungs that did not work. His intestines were not yet whole, and twice we thought he would die. Many times, I have handed my son's life over to surgeons operating on a walnut sized brain, and to God to guide their hands.

As my son has grown, we have benefited from pediatricians who have worked tirelessly to heal him; to give him not only life, but a life worth living. We can call our pediatrician, email her with questions and be a partner in his treatment. The nurses in the office know us, and help us find solutions that work for Logan, and work for our family. Our values and concerns are heard, and I am able to value the pediatrician's input in a real way. I can take both of my little ones in for the same cold, at the same appointment time. Our pediatrician is building a medical home; and I want her, and other practices around the state, to be able to be recognized and to be able to collaborate; for truly, collaboration is only know to strengthen us.

Once a child is known to have special health care needs, they require a medical home. A medical home is a source of ongoing, routine health care in their own community where providers and families work together as partners to meet the needs of children and families.

A medical home assists in the early identification of special health care needs, provides ongoing primary care, and coordinates with a broad range of other specialty, ancillary, and related services.

A medical home provides the best patient and family-centered care. It provides a place where access to care is continuous and comprehensive, and it provides a place for chronic disease management.

The children of Montana need access to medical homes, and physicians who want to create a medical home need to be able to so.

With sincere thanks,

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